



## Conceptualizing and Measuring Gender, Risk, and Safety

### *The MARS-Project*

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# Conceptualizing and Measuring Gender, Risk, and Safety

The MARS-Project



*PRESENTATION AT THE WORKSHOP:  
GENDEREMERGENCIES – THEORIES AND  
METHODOLOGIES*

*LINKÖPING UNIVERSITY*

*SEPTEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup>, 2011*

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**SUNE QVOTRUP JENSEN**

**CLAUS D. HANSEN**

# Outline



1) Normative approach to masculinity research: To go beyond the gender equality approach

(Ann-Dorte Christensen)

2) Theoretical understanding: The relationship between masculinity and safety.

(Sune Qvotrup Jensen)

3) The Mars Project – Research design, Measuring and Examples

(Claus D. Hansen)

# MARS

**M**ÆND | **A**RBEJDSULYKKER | **S**IKKERHED

***Men, Accidents, Risk, and Safety***

*Funded by*

*The Danish Health and Safety Research Fund (2010-2013)*

# The MARS TEAM



## **Aalborg University (sociologists)**

Ann-Dorte Christensen,  
Claus D. Hansen,  
Sune Q. Jensen,  
Lotte Bloksgaard,  
Morten Kyed (Ph.D.student)

## **Department of Occupational Medicine, Regional Hospital Herning:**

Kent J. Nielsen, Psychologist  
Kurt Rasmussen, Medical doctor and Head of department

# Main objective



- To investigate the relationship between gender identity/masculinity and the risk of work accidents.
- To identify variations in the construction of masculinities within and across different trades and vocations.
- To examine the existence of a John Wayne syndrome. How do normative perceptions of what 'being a real man' means influence the amount of work accidents`?

# Normative positions



- 1) There is a lack of knowledge about men that goes beyond the agenda of gender equality → broaden the perspective to social equality
- 2) There is a lack of knowledge about male culture and different, competing forms of masculinity. Important to understand power relations in society.
- 3) The question of men is very important in order to analyse the power relations in society. Men are over represented in the top and the bottom of society:

**hegemonic masculinity** (Connell)

**the extreme gender** (Hans Bonde) and **the gender profile in social exclusion** (John Andersen og Jørgen Elm Larsen)  
emphasise the argument that power of privileged men must be seen in relation to the weak resources of underprivileged and maybe marginalized men

# Understanding the gendered implication of social inequality in society



- 1) to understand the power mechanism **at the top of society**
- 2) to pinpoint the particular problems in terms of **marginalization and exclusion** associated with underprivileged groups of men

How is this related to the MARS project



# Theoretical approach



- Work related accidents are a result of human practice which 'goes wrong' (no attempt to explain technical errors from external sources)
- Practice is gendered
- An attempt to understand how gendered practices leads to (a higher risk of) work related accidents.
- 2 models: praxeological and poststructuralist

# Model 1: Praxeological



## **Gender, habitus and the practical sense.**

- Based on the Bourdieuan concept of habitus (the socialized body)
- Habitus contains a practical sense (know how)
- But habitus is also gendered (knowing how to do things like a man does)
- Being a man/masculinity and know how are two sides of the same coin. Both are learned through mimetic processes that are both enabling and constraining
- Collective and individual at the same time
- Becomes embodied through life trajectory
- Focus on socialisation
- Focus on continuity, stability and inertia
- Gender is not seen as contextual and situational!

# Model 2: Poststructuralist understanding



## A poststructuralist understanding of gender

- *Doing gender* (West & Zimmermann 1987) *Doing difference* (West & Fenstermaker 1995) ( an ethnomethodological understanding of gender)
- When we engage in interactions with others we are met with certain expectations
- When we do as expected (do man properly) we do gender
- Focus on local normativities
- Butler performativity/citatonality
- We are called upon (interpellated) to do gender in an appropriate (intelligible) way
- We then *cite* appropriate ways to be a man (failure to do so is met with control, violence etc.)
- But these normativities are always instable (although Butler is *not* a voluntarist!)
- Focus on local normativities, instability, gender is seen as situational
- Gender is not seen as stabile

# Contrasting the 2 models



<b><i>Praxeological understanding</i></b>	<b><i>Poststructuralism</i></b>
Gender identity is understood as relatively stable because it is embodied	Gender identity is seen as in principle instable and situational
We do as we do because we have through our practical engagement with the world accumulated a practical sense which is also gendered	We do as we do to perform that we are appropriate gendered subjects
The gendered way of doing things are based upon earlier experience (life trajectory)	The gendered way of acting is primarily conditioned by local normativities and imperatives
Practical sense/habitus -> practice	Normative discourses -> practice
Relevant to measure: Conditions which influence gender socialization in various arenas	Relevant to measure: Local discourses about what is an appropriate male worker

## A third model (which does not fit neatly into the table above)



Connell, hegemonic masculinity and struggles between different masculinities

- An ideal, the authoritative masculinity in a given context
- Oppresses women
- Oppresses other masculinities
- Polices masculinity
- Relevant to measure: which masculinities prevail in specific workplaces, trades etc

# Hypotheses and study design

**Accidents** – traditional masculinity ideals: taking risks, showing force and strength, not asking for help → higher risk of experiencing an accident

**Main project:** Survey to app. 5300 slaughterhouseworkers and emergency workers (ambulance workers/fire fighters) (n = 2500/3800). Follow-up study with 1 year follow up. Linked to register based information on occupational accidents. Questionnaire on work environment exposures, attitudes to safety and masculinity.

**PhD-project:** Qualitative study, Morten Kyed primary investigator.



## **Two trades:**

- Rescue workers – Falck rescue service
- Slaughterhouse

## **Combination of different methods:**

- Quantitative data: questionnaires (the two trades)
- Qualitative data: field work and interviews (ph.d.project)
- Focus group interviews (identifying new masculinity ideals)

# Male Role Norms Inventory – revised

## Dominance (Cronbachs $\alpha = 0,70$ )

- 2. The President of the US should always be a man.
- 3. Men should be the leader in any group.
- 44. A man should always be the major provider in his family.
- 51. Men should make the final decision involving money.

## Extreme Self-reliance (Cronbachs $\alpha = 0,49$ )

- 4. A man should be able to perform his job even if he is physically ill or hurt.
- 12. Men should not borrow money from friends or family members.
- 13. Men should have home improvement skills.
- 14. Men should be able to fix most things around the house.

## Aggression (Cronbachs $\alpha = 0,55$ )

- 34. If another man flirts with the women accompanying a man, this is a serious provocation and the man should respond with aggression.
- 35. Boys should be encouraged to find a means of demonstrating physical prowess.
- 42. It is important for a man to take risks, even if he might get hurt.
- 45. When the going gets tough, men should get tough.

## Restrictive Emotionality (Cronbachs $\alpha = 0,63$ )

- 33. Being a little down in the dumps is not a good reason for a man to act depressed.
- 41. Men should be detached in emotionally charged situations.
- 46. I might find it a little silly or embarrassing if a male friend of mine cried over a sad love story.
- 50. One should not be able to tell how a man is feeling by looking at his face.

**BEM SEX ROLE INVENTORY** (<http://www.neiu.edu/~tschuepf/bsri.html>)

Rate yourself on each item, on a scale from 1 (never or almost never true) to 7 (almost always true).

1. defends own beliefs	21. leadership ability	41. warm
2. athletic	22. willing to take risks	42. tender
3. affectionate	23. compassionate	43. acts as a leader
4. assertive	24. dominant	44. competitive
5. Flatterable	25. masculine	45. ambitious

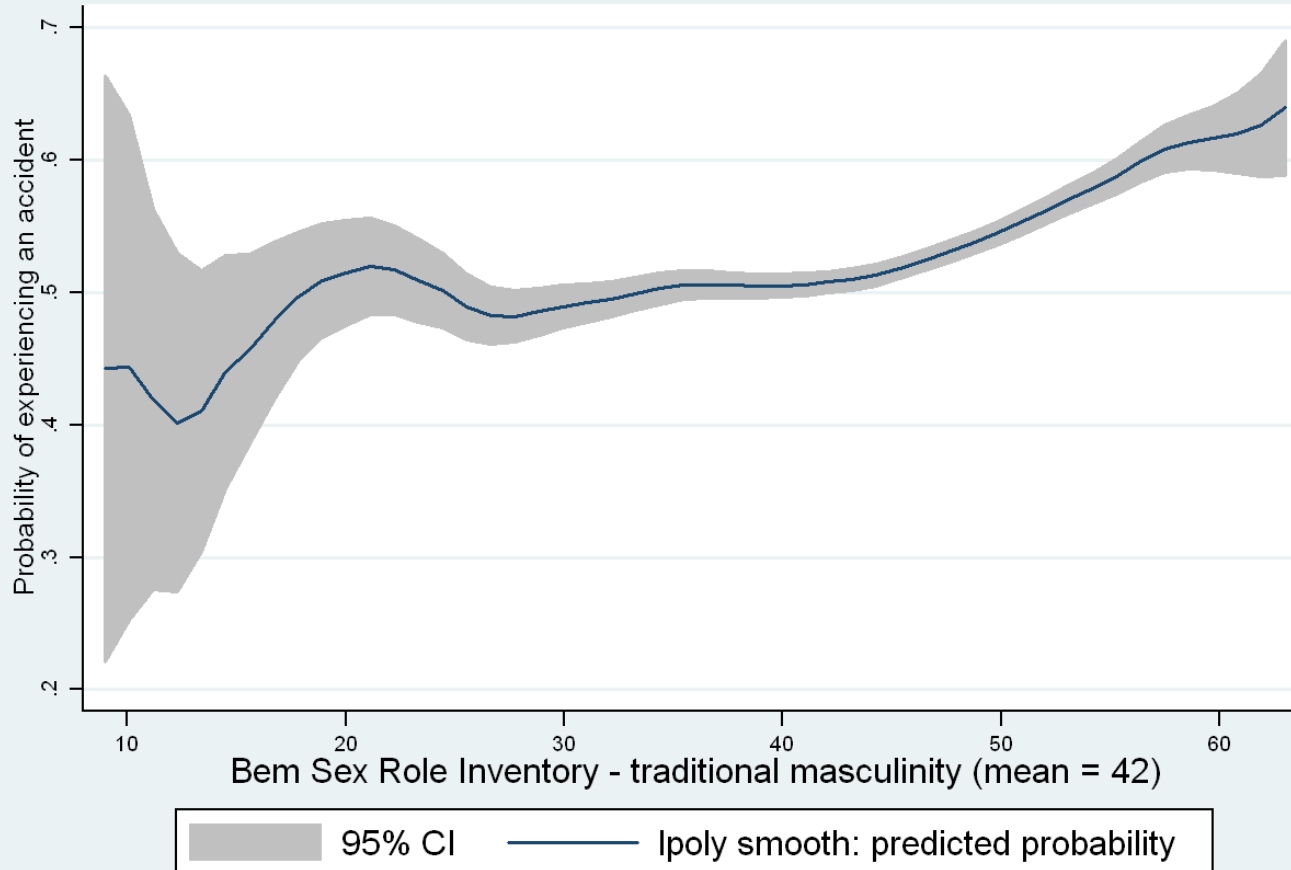


# Masculinity and accidents

Association between accidents in company register and Bem Sex Role Inventory - Masculinity



Association between traditional masculinity traits and registered work accidents



Probability of having at least one accident in company register in the 12 months before answering questionnaire rise from app. 48% to 62% from lowest to highest scores on Bem.

Adjusted for sex, age, job function and work environment.  
(Logistic regression)